



Budget bill reopens moderate vs. progressive divide for Dems

WASHINGTON (AP) — One side is energized by the prospect of the greatest expansion of government support since the New Deal nearly a century ago. The other is fearful about dramatically expanding Washington's reach at an enormous cost.

They're all Democrats. Yet each side is taking vastly different approaches to guiding the massive \$3.5 trillion spending bill through Congress.

The party is again confronting the competing political priorities between its progressive and moderate wings. The House version of the bill that was drafted this week ushered in a new phase of the debate that could test whether Democrats can match their bold campaign rhetoric on eve-

rything from income inequality to climate change with actual legislation.

Any stumble may have serious consequences for the party's prospects during next year's midterms, when it will try to prevent Republicans from retaking Congress. The finished product could alienate centrists who say it goes too far, or frustrate those on the left who argue it's too timid at a moment of great consequence.

"This is critically important for Democrats and for their message in next year's election," said former New York congressman Joe Crowley, a veteran Democrat who was upset in the 2018 primary by progressive star, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

Continued on next page



**DEM
AGAINST
DEM**

In this Feb. 25, 2015, file photo Rep. Joe Crowley, D-N.Y., left, accompanied by Rep. Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., gestures during news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

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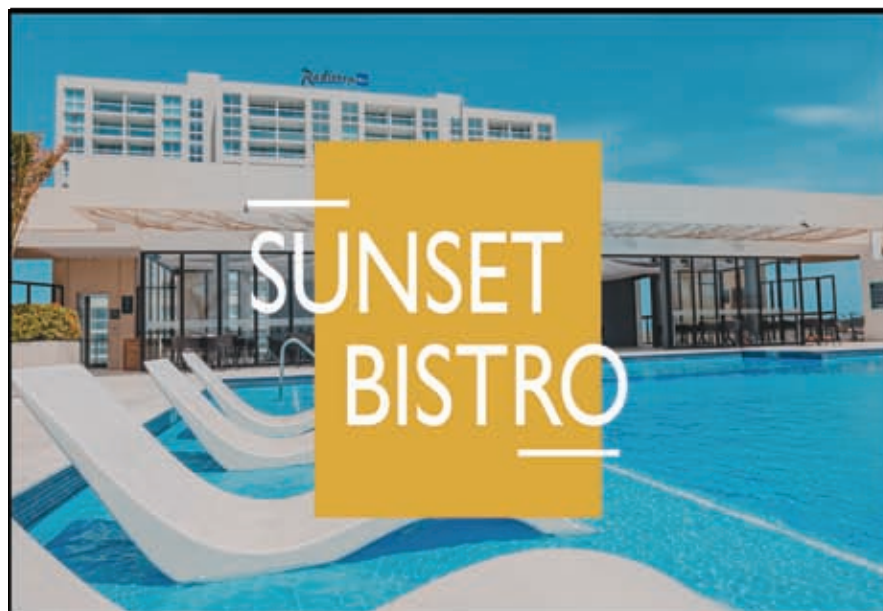


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In this June 16, 2021, file photo Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., listens as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., speaks during a news conference at the Capitol in Washington.

Associated Press

Continued from Front

"We're going to blink and we're going to be in 2022." Crowley said bills proposing trillions of dollars in spending were "simply something I never had to deal with in my 20 years" in office. "These are enormous figures by any standard," he said.

But, Crowley added, no matter the final price tag, "Let's not lose sight of the fact that this will be transformational regardless."

With Republicans universally opposed to the bill, Democratic leaders have a narrow path as they navigate an evenly divided Senate and thin House majority.

Many Democrats agree on the goals included in the legislation, such as providing universal pre-kindergarten and tuition-free community college while increasing federal funding for child care, paid family leave and combating climate change. The party also is aiming to expand health care coverage through Medicare and cre-

ate pathways to citizenship for millions of immigrants in the country illegally.

But there are differences over how much such a measure should cost and how it should be paid for.

Democratic Sens. Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, who met privately with President Joe Biden on Wednesday, have balked at the \$3.5 trillion price tag. House Democrats, meanwhile, have proposed a 26.5% top corporate tax rate to help cover the cost. That's less than Biden's 28% target. But Manchin has pushed for an even lower corporate rate of 25%.

There are also divides over how to impose levies on top earners. Biden has advocated restoring the top tax rate on capital gains to 39.6%. House Democrats, however, would tax such income, which is often generated by the wealthy, at 25%. They would also impose a 3% surcharge on individual income above \$5 million.

Biden further supports higher taxes for those earning at least \$400,000 annually, even as some progressives would like to see a lower threshold for higher taxes to kick in.

"We're not going to raise taxes on anyone making under \$400,000 That's a lot of money," the president said Thursday. "Some of my liberal friends are saying it should be lower than that."

While such differences are technical, they represent a desire among many House Democratic leaders to protect their most vulnerable members in moderate districts from attacks that they support profligate taxes and spending.

"There's a supposition by our friends on the progressive left that it hardly matters what you do, as long as it's big," said Will Marshall, president of the Progressive Policy Institute, a centrist Washington think tank. Instead, Democrats are ideologically diverse enough that "people who run in competitive races simply can't embrace the same kind of ideas that people who run in safe, blue Democratic districts," Marshall said.

Joseph Geevarghese, executive director of the progressive activist group Our Revolution, countered that "It would be incredibly problematic for the president to say, 'Look we won both chambers of Congress. We won the White House. We couldn't deliver better health care, we couldn't deliver transformational change on the climate.'"

"It is not going to be explainable to the American people," Geevarghese

said, "and I think there'll be consequences as a result." Democrats have been here before. The progressive versus moderate divide dominated the early stages of the party's 2020 presidential primary with Biden and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders serving as the most prominent representatives of each end of the spectrum.

Sanders, an independent who caucuses with the Democrats, scored early victories. But the party ultimately coalesced around Biden, in part because of an urgent desire to unify behind a candidate who could have the broadest appeal and defeat then-President Donald Trump.

Biden has since largely kept the party unified by adopting many top progressive priorities, such as spearheading a \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief bill that passed in March and supporting a now-stalled proposal to raise the national minimum wage to \$15 per hour. He has resisted, however, some of the biggest progressive goals, including the universal health care proposal known as Medicare for All.

But it's unclear whether that equilibrium can be maintained. Already, Our Revolution and other progressive activists have staged protests outside the offices of moderates including Manchin. They've begun referring to themselves as the "tea party of the left" combatting "obstructionist corporate Democrats."

Manchin is so far unmoved. "I've been very clear and very open" about the need to reduce the budget bill's price tag, he said.

In the House, meanwhile, Democratic Florida Rep. Stephanie Murphy, head of the moderate Blue Dog Coalition, opposed parts of the spending package in committee, arguing that her party's effort to muscle it through was too rushed.

Progressives, though, have responded by playing their own legislative hardball. Democratic Rep. Pramila Jayapal of Washington, co-chairwoman of House Progressive Caucus, said the group remains unified behind a vow not to support a separate bill that many moderate Democrats are more excited about — a \$1 trillion, bipartisan public works measure — until the spending bill advances.

"Joe Manchin has power, of course. We need his vote. But so do, really, every single one of us, because in the House, (Democrats) have a margin of three votes," Jayapal said on a conference call with progressive activists. "Everyone's a Joe Manchin here." Sanders, who spearheaded the proposal as head of the Senate Budget Committee after some progressives pushed for spending plans worth as much as \$6 trillion, says the current price tag is compromise enough and has vowed not to accept further cuts. He says tax increases on the rich can resonate with working class voters from both parties.

Marshall said many voters in battleground House districts do indeed applaud higher levies for the wealthy as "tax fairness," but that support wanes if additional spending focuses more on social programs than economic stimulus. □

Biden angers France, EU with new Australia, U.K. initiative

By MATTHEW LEE

AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden's decision to form a strategic Indo-Pacific alliance with Australia and Britain to counter China is angering France and the European Union. They're feeling left out and seeing it as a return to the Trump era.

The security initiative, unveiled this week, appears to have brought Biden's summer of love with Europe to an abrupt end. AUKUS, which notably excludes France and the European Union, is just the latest in a series of steps, from Afghanistan to east Asia, that have taken Europe aback. After promising European leaders that "America is back" and that multilateral diplomacy would guide U.S. foreign policy, Biden has alienated numerous allies with a go-it-alone approach on key issues. France's foreign minister expressed "total incomprehension" at the recent move, which he called a "stab in the back," and the EU's foreign policy chief complained that Europe had not been consulted.

France will lose a nearly \$100 billion deal to build diesel submarines for Australia under the terms of the initiative, which will see the U.S. and Britain help Canberra construct nuclear-powered ones.

As such, French anger on a purely a commercial level would be understand-



President Joe Biden delivers remarks on the economy in the East Room of the White House, Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021, in Washington.

Associated Press

able, particularly because France, since Britain's handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997, is the only European nation to have significant territorial possessions or a permanent military presence in the Pacific. But French and European Union officials went further, saying the agreement calls into question the entire cooperative effort to blunt China's growing influence and underscores the importance of languishing plans to boost Europe's own defense and security capabilities.

Some have compared Biden's recent actions to those of his predecessor, Donald Trump, under Trump's "America First" doctrine. That's surprising for a

president steeped in international affairs who ran for the White House vowing to mend shaken ties with allies and restore U.S. credibility on the world stage.

Although it's impossible to predict if any damage will be lasting, the short-term impact seems to have rekindled European suspicions of American intentions — with potential implications for Biden's broader aim to unite democracies against authoritarianism, focused primarily on China and Russia.

Just three months ago, on his first visit to the continent as president, Biden was hailed as a hero by European counterparts eager to move beyond the trans-Atlantic tensions of the Trump

years. But that palpable sense of relief has now faded for many, and its one clear winner, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, is on her way out.

Since June, Biden has infuriated America's oldest ally, France, left Poland and Ukraine questioning the U.S. commitment to their security and upset the European Union more broadly with unilateral decisions ranging from Afghanistan to east Asia. And, while Europe cheered when Biden pledged to return to nuclear negotiations with Iran and revive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, both efforts remain stalled nine months into his administration.

The seeds of discontent

may have been sown in the spring but they began to bloom in July over Biden's acquiescence to a Russia-to-Germany gas pipeline that will bypass Poland and Ukraine, and a month later in August with the chaotic U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan that left Europe scrambling to keep up after it had expressed reservations about the pullout. Then just this week, Biden enraged France and the European Union with his announcement that the U.S. would join post-Brexit Britain and Australia in a new Indo-Pacific security initiative aimed at countering China's increasing aggressiveness in the region.

Unsurprisingly, China reacted angrily, accusing the U.S. and its English-speaking partners of embarking on a project that will destabilize the Pacific to the detriment of global security. But, the reactions from Paris and Brussels were equally severe. Both complained they were not only excluded from the deal but not consulted on it.

The White House and Secretary of State Antony Blinken say France had been informed of the decision before it was announced on Wednesday, although it was not exactly clear when. Blinken said Thursday there had been conversations with the French about it within the past 24 to 48 hours, suggesting there had not been an in-depth consultation. □

Polis, 1st openly gay governor elected, marries in Colorado

BOULDER, Colo. (AP) — Colorado's Jared Polis, who became the first openly gay man in the United States to be elected governor in 2018, has married his longtime partner and first gentleman Marlon Reis, a writer and animal welfare advocate. Polis, 46, and Reis, 40, were married in a traditional Jewish ceremony attended by family and friends in Boulder on Wednesday,

the governor's office said. Rabbi Tirzah Firestone officiated.

They have been together for 18 years and have two children, a 7-year-old boy and a 9-year-old girl. The family lives in Boulder.

Polis, a Democrat, and Reis were engaged in December as Reis was preparing to be hospitalized after contracting COVID-19. Reis was released from the hospital after two

days. Polis also caught the coronavirus but had only mild symptoms.

"The greatest lesson we have learned over the past eighteen months is that life as we know it can change in an instant," the couple said in a statement. "We are thankful for the health and wellbeing of our family and friends, and the opportunity to celebrate our life together as a married couple." □



In this photo provided by Jocelyn Augustino, Rabbi Tirzah Firestone, center, officiates a traditional Jewish wedding ceremony attended by family and friends for Colorado Gov. Jared Polis, left, and his partner, Marlon Reis, in Boulder, Colo. on Wednesday Sept. 15, 2021.

Associated Press

Hundreds of migrating songbirds crash into NYC skyscrapers

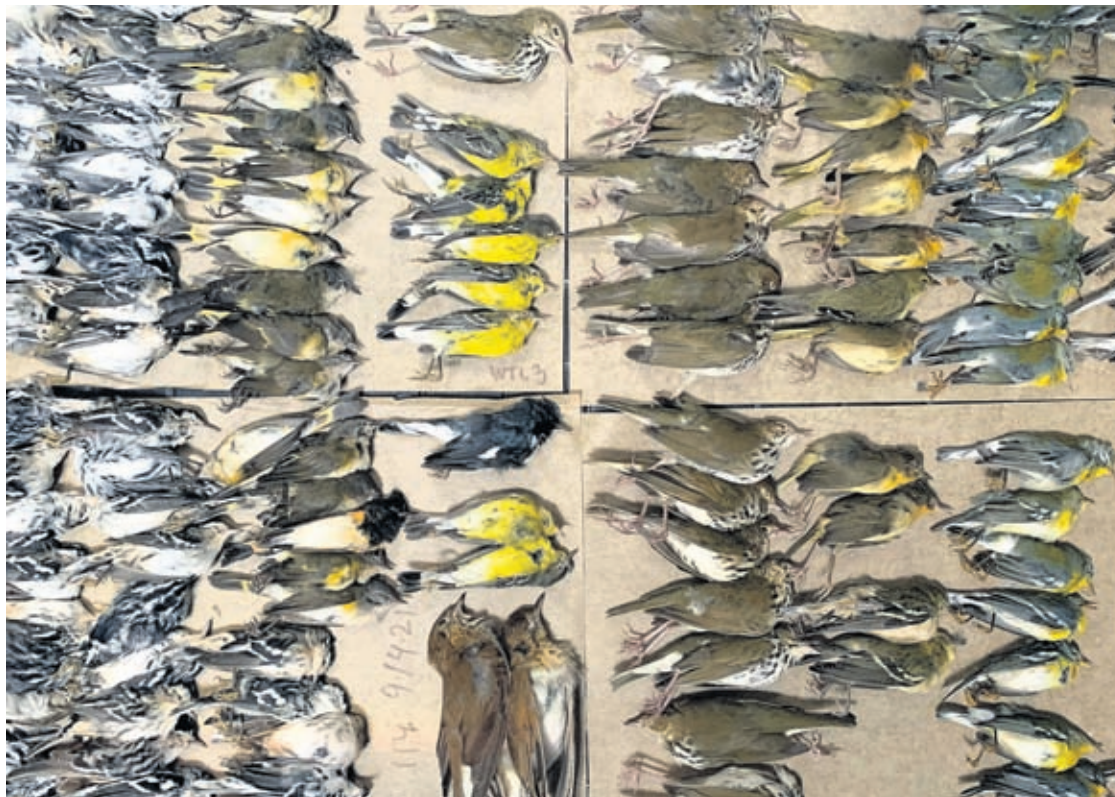
By KAREN MATTHEWS

NEW YORK (AP) — Hundreds of birds migrating through New York City this week died after crashing into the city's glass towers, a mass casualty event spotlighted by a New York City Audubon volunteer's tweets showing the World Trade Center littered with bird carcasses.

This week's avian death toll was particularly high, but bird strikes on Manhattan skyscrapers are a persistent problem that NYC Audubon has documented for years, said Kaitlyn Parkins, the group's associate director of conservation and science.

Stormy weather Monday night into Tuesday contributed to the deaths, she said.

"We had a big storm and sort of weird weather and lots of birds, and that's sort of the perfect combination that can lead to bird-window collisions," Parkins said. "It seems that the storm might have brought the birds in lower than they would have otherwise have been, or just disoriented them," Parkins added. "The effects of nocturnal light on birds is also quite strong, es-



This photo provided by Melissa Breyer shows some of the dead birds collected in the vicinity of New York's World Trade Center, Tuesday, Sept. 14, 2021.

Associated Press

pecially when it's a cloudy night."

Volunteers with NYC Audubon document bird deaths at high-risk spots during the spring and fall migrations. Melissa Breyer, the volunteer who tweeted about finding nearly 300 birds on sidewalks surrounding the new World Trade Center towers, said the experience

was "overwhelming."

"As soon as I got to the buildings, the birds were everywhere on the sidewalk," Breyer said. "Looking north, covered, south, covered, west, covered, the sidewalks were literally covered with birds."

NYC Audubon wants the owners of the World Trade Center towers and other

buildings to help reduce the number of bird strikes by dimming the lights at night and by treating glass to make it more visible to birds.

"Make it so that they can see it and recognize that it's a solid barrier that they cannot fly through," Parkins said.

Jordan Barowitz, a spokes-

person for the Durst Organization, co-developer of One World Trade Center, said in an email, "The first 200 feet of One WTC are encased in glass fins that are non-reflective. This design was chosen because it greatly reduces bird strikes which mostly occur below 200 feet and are frequently caused by reflective glass." Dara McQuillan, a spokesperson for Silverstein Properties, the developer of three other trade center skyscrapers, said, "We care deeply for wild birds and protecting their habitat in the five boroughs. Understanding that artificial night-time lighting in general can attract and disorient migrating birds, we are actively encouraging our office tenants to turn off their lights at night and lower their blinds wherever possible, especially during the migratory season."

It wasn't the last flight for all the birds that crashed. Some survived.

A total of 77 birds were taken to the Wild Bird Fund's rehab facility on the Upper West Side on Tuesday, the majority of them from the trade center area, director Ritamary McMahon said. □

California wildfires threaten famous giant sequoia trees



A helicopter drops water on the KNP Complex Fire burning along Generals Highway in Sequoia National Park, Calif., on Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2021.

Associated Press

By NOAH BERGER and JOHN ANTCHAK

Associated Press

THREE RIVERS, Calif. (AP) — Multiple forest fires on Thursday were threatening groves of gigantic sequoias in California's Sierra

Nevada mountains that are home to some of the world's largest trees.

Flames would likely reach the famous Giant Forest in Sequoia National Park, where two fires have been burning since lightning ig-

nited them on Sept. 9, according to a briefing for fire crews. It comes after a wildfire killed thousands of sequoias, some as tall as high-rises and thousands of years old, in the region last year.

Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks Superintendent Clay Jordan stressed the importance of protecting the massive trees from high-intensity fire.

A national interagency fire management team took command of efforts to fight the 11-square-mile (29-square-kilometer) Paradise Fire and the 2.5-square-mile (6.5-square-kilometer) Colony Fire, which was closest to the grove. Operations to burn away vegetation and other fuel that could feed the flames were planned for that area.

The fires forced the evacuation of the park this week, and additional areas in the town of Three Rivers outside the main entrance were ordered evacuated Thursday.

To the south, a fire on the Tule River Indian Reservation and in Giant Sequoia National Monument grew significantly overnight to more than 6 square miles (15 square kilometers), and crews had no containment of it, a Sequoia National Forest statement said.

The Windy Fire, also started by lightning, has burned into part of the Peyrone Sequoia Grove in the national monument, and other groves were threatened.

"Due to inaccessible terrain, a preliminary assessment of the fire's effects on giant sequoia trees within

the grove will be difficult and may take days to complete," the statement said. The fire led the Tulare County Sheriff's Office to warn the community of Johnsondale and Camp Whitsett, a Boy Scouts camp, to be ready to evacuate if necessary.

The wildfires are among the latest in a long summer of blazes that have scorched nearly 3,550 square miles (9,195 square kilometers) in California, destroying hundreds of homes.

A 50-year history of using prescribed burns — fires set on purpose to remove other types of trees and vegetation — in the parks' sequoia groves was expected to help the giant trees survive by lessening the impact if flames reach them. □

Hezbollah brings Iran fuel to Lebanon despite U.S. sanctions

Associated Press

AL-AIN, Lebanon (AP) —

Dozens of trucks carrying Iranian diesel arrived in Lebanon on Thursday, the first in a series of deliveries organized by the militant Hezbollah. The powerful group operates independently from Lebanese authorities, which are struggling to deal with a crippling energy crisis.

The overland delivery through neighboring Syria violates U.S. sanctions imposed on Tehran after former President Donald Trump pulled America out of a nuclear deal between Iran and world powers in 2018.

The shipment is being portrayed as a victory by Hezbollah, which stepped in to supply the fuel from its patron, Iran, while the cash-strapped Lebanese government grapples with months-long fuel shortages that have paralyzed the country.

"This is a very big and great thing for us because we broke the siege of America and foreign countries. ... We are working with the help of God and our great mother Iran," said Nabihah Idriss, a Hezbollah supporter gathered with others to greet the convoy as it passed through the eastern town of Al-Ain.

There was no immediate



Hezbollah supporter celebrate as a convoy of tanker trucks carrying Iranian diesel crossed the border from Syria into Lebanon, arrives at the eastern town of el-Ain, Lebanon, Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021.

Associated Press

comment from Lebanese or U.S. officials on the Iranian fuel delivery. Local commentators said Washington, worried about chaos in Lebanon amid raging, multiple crises, may have decided to look the other way.

Hezbollah has portrayed the Lebanese economic meltdown, which began in late 2019, as partly caused by an informal siege imposed by America due to the militant group's power and influence in Lebanon. The group — designated a terrorist organization by

Washington — has been sanctioned by consecutive U.S. administrations.

Lebanon's crisis is rooted in decades of corruption and mismanagement by the ruling class and a sectarian-based political system that thrives on patronage and nepotism. Severe shortages in fuel have resulted in crippling power cuts. People wait hours in line for gasoline. Protests and scuffles have broken out at gas stations around Lebanon including in some Hezbollah strongholds.

Hezbollah's leader, Sayyed

Hassan Nasrallah, announced last month that Iran was sending fuel to Lebanon to help ease the crisis. The first Hezbollah-commissioned Iranian oil tanker arrived in the Syrian port of Baniyas on Sunday and the diesel was unloaded to Syrian storage places before it was brought overland to Lebanon on Thursday by tanker trucks.

The convoy of 60 trucks, each carrying 50,000 liters (13,210 gallons), went through an informal border crossing in Qusayr in Syria. Another convoy of 60 tank-

er trucks is expected Friday. Hezbollah, often accused of operating a state-within-a-state, has been taking part in Syria's civil war alongside government forces. It manages its own crossing points along the Lebanon-Syria border, away from formal border crossings.

Nasrallah said in a televised speech earlier this week that the tanker did not offload its cargo directly in Lebanon to avoid embarrassing authorities and risking sanctions on Lebanon. Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV called it "the tanker truck convoys to break the American siege." It said the trucks were on their way to the eastern Lebanese city of Baalbek where a Hezbollah-linked distribution company will start distributing the fuel. Nasrallah said the company, al-Amana, which is already under U.S. sanctions, won't risk new penalties.

For critics, however, the convoy is a symbol of the dissolution of the Lebanese state. While the oil delivery was seen as a victory for Hezbollah, the group is facing growing internal criticism for increasingly pulling Lebanon into Iran's orbit and for defending its political allies who resist change rather than push for reform. □

Obama endorses Trudeau in the Canadian election

By ROB GILLIES

Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Barack Obama endorsed Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Thursday in the Canadian election, calling him an effective leader in a rare endorsement of a candidate in a Canadian election by a former American president.

It is the second time Obama has done it. Obama also urged Canadians to re-elect the Liberal leader in Canada's last election in 2019.

Obama tweeted Thursday that he was proud to work with Trudeau and described him as an effec-

tive leader who has strong democratic values.

Trudeau is in a tough re-election fight with his Conservative rival ahead of Monday's parliamentary elections. Obama's endorsement helped Trudeau with progressives in 2019.

Obama also endorsed Emmanuel Macron for president in France's 2017 election, and he warned British voters against leaving the European Union.

Trudeau formed a close relationship with Obama when he was president.

The former president has long been popular with many Canadians.

"This is welcomed by Trudeau and Co. but not a surprise," said Nelson Wiseman, a political science professor at the University of Toronto. "Will Obama's endorsement make a difference? Not many voters are still undecided so the material impact of Obama's endorsement is minimal in my opinion. I think it is more symbolic of Liberal affinity with the Democrats which has been the case since JFK in the 1960s."

Daniel Béland, a political science professor at McGill University, said it can only help Trudeau with progressive voters.



Liberal leader Justin Trudeau makes a point during the federal election French-language leaders debate, Wednesday, Sept. 8, 2021, in Gatineau, Quebec.

Associated Press

"Obama remains very popular in Canada and, although it's unlikely to al-

ter the race, this is something positive for the Liberals," Béland said. □

Friction among Taliban pragmatists, hard-liners intensifies

By KATHY GANNON

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)

— Friction between pragmatists and ideologues in the Taliban leadership has intensified since the group formed a hard-line Cabinet last week that is more in line with their harsh rule in the 1990s than their recent promises of inclusiveness, said two Afghans familiar with the power struggle. The wrangling has taken place behind the scenes, but rumors quickly began circulating about a recent violent confrontation between the two camps at the presidential palace, including claims that the leader of the pragmatic faction, Abdul Ghani Baradar, was killed.

The rumors reached such intensity that an audio recording and handwritten statement, both purportedly by Baradar himself, denied that he had been killed. Then on Wednesday, Baradar appeared in an interview with the country's national TV.

"I was traveling from Kabul so had no access to media in order to reject this news" Baradar said of the rumor. Baradar served as the chief negotiator during talks between the Taliban and the



In this Aug. 15, 2021 file photo, Taliban fighters take control of Afghan presidential palace in Kabul, Afghanistan, after President Ashraf Ghani fled the country.

Associated Press

United States that paved the way for the U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, which was completed in late August, two weeks after the Taliban overran the capital of Kabul.

Shortly after the Kabul takeover, Baradar had been the first senior Taliban official to hold out the possibility of an inclusive government, but such hopes

were disappointed with the formation of an all-male, all-Taliban lineup last week. In a further sign that the hard-liners had prevailed, the white Taliban flag was raised over the presidential palace, replacing the Afghan national flag.

A Taliban official said the leadership still hasn't made a final decision on the flag, with many leaning toward

eventually flying both banners side by side. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not allowed to discuss internal deliberations with the media.

The two Afghans familiar with the power struggle also spoke on condition of anonymity to protect the confidentiality of those who shared their discon-

tent over the Cabinet lineup. They said one Cabinet minister toyed with refusing his post, angered by the all-Taliban government that shunned the country's ethnic and religious minorities. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid has denied rifts in the leadership. On Tuesday, the Taliban foreign minister, Amir Khan Mutaqi, dismissed such reports as "propaganda."

Baradar had been noticeably absent from key functions. For instance he was not at the presidential palace earlier this week to receive the deputy prime minister of Qatar, Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdul Rahman Al-Thani, who is also foreign minister and was making the highest-level foreign visit yet since the Taliban takeover. Baradar's absence was jarring since Qatar had hosted him for years as head of the Taliban political office in the Qatari capital of Doha. But in the interview shown Wednesday, Baradar said he did not participate in the meeting because he was not aware about the foreign minister's visit to Kabul. "I had already left and was not able to return back," Baradar said. □

German police detain 4 on Yom Kippur after synagogue threat



Police officers stay in front of the entrance to the Jewish Community building in Hagen, Germany, Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2021.

By KIRSTEN GRIESHABER

Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — A 16-year-old boy and three other people were detained Thursday in connection with a suspected plan for an Islamic extremist attack

Associated Press

on a synagogue in the German city of Hagen, authorities said.

The detentions took place on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in Judaism, and two years after a deadly attack in another German city on

the Yom Kippur holiday. Police cordoned off the synagogue on Wednesday and a worship service planned for the evening was called off.

Officials had received "very serious and concrete information" that there could be an attack on the synagogue during Yom Kippur, said Herbert Reul, the interior minister of North Rhine-Westphalia state, where Hagen is located. The tip pointed to "an Islamist-motivated threat situation," and named the possible timing and suspect, he added. Police using sniffer dogs found no dangerous objects in or around the synagogue, Reul said. On Thursday morning, the 16-year-old, a Syrian national who lives in Hagen,

was detained. Three other people were detained in a raid on an apartment, and authorities are investigating whether they were involved in the suspected plan, the minister said.

Reul said searches were ongoing in Hagen, but gave no details and took no questions. He didn't say where the tip came from. News magazine Der Spiegel reported, without identifying sources, that the tip came from a foreign intelligence service. It said the teenager told someone in an online chat that he was planning an attack with explosives on a synagogue, and the probe led investigators to the 16-year-old, who lived with his father in Hagen.

Two years ago on Yom Kip-

pur, a German right-wing extremist attacked a synagogue in the eastern German city of Halle. The attack on is considered one of the worst anti-Semitic assaults in the country's post-war history.

The attacker repeatedly tried, but failed, to force his way into the synagogue with 52 worshippers inside. He then shot and killed a 40-year-old woman in the street outside and a 20-year-old man at a nearby kebab shop as an "appropriate target" with immigrant roots.

He posted an anti-Semitic screed before carrying out the Oct. 9, 2019, attack in the eastern German city of Halle and broadcast the shooting live on a popular gaming site. □

Thousands protest against Bukele government in El Salvador

By MARCOS ALEMÁN

Associated Press

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP) —

Thousands of people gathered in El Salvador's capital Wednesday for the first mass march against President Nayib Bukele, who protesters say has concentrated too much power, weakened the independence of the courts and may seek reelection.

Some marchers are also protesting the controversial decision by Bukele's government to make the cryptocurrency Bitcoin legal tender in El Salvador, the first country to do so. Officials rolled out a digital wallet known as the "Chivo" one week ago, but the system has been down frequently for maintenance. Some marchers wore T-shirts that read "NO To Bitcoin." A few demonstrators vandalized the special ATM machines set up to handle Bitcoin transactions, but which have been inoperable anyway for much of the week. The cubicle housing one ATM machine was destroyed.

"They say the 'vandalism' was the work of 'infiltrators,' but there has been vandalism in ALL their demonstrations," Bukele wrote in his Twitter account. "And why weren't there any shouts of 'stop,' or 'Don't do that?'"



A Chivo digital wallet ATM, which exchanges cash for Bitcoin cryptocurrency, burns after being torched during a protest against President Nayib Bukele in San Salvador, El Salvador, Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2021.

Associated Press

The populist president elected in 2019 has maintained high popularity with his vows to stamp out corruption that was rampant among the country's traditional parties. But some Salvadorans say he is becoming "a dictator" and Wednesday's march was the first large protest against his government.

"The time has come to defend democracy," said one of the protesters, former Supreme Court justice Sidney Blanco. "This march is symbolic, it represents weariness with so many violations of the Constitution."

Bukele's New Ideas party

won a congressional majority this year and immediately after taking its seats in the National Assembly in May, it replaced the five members of the Constitutional Chamber and the independent attorney general who had balked at several of Bukele's earlier actions.

Soon after, the Constitutional Chamber tossed aside what had long been interpreted as a constitutional ban on consecutive presidential reelection, setting the stage for Bukele to potentially seek a second term in 2024. Bukele has not so far announced plans to

seek reelection, but critics assume he will.

Milton Brizuela, leader of the country's medical association, said "judicial independence is important to us."

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken issued a statement congratulating Central American countries on their shared independence day Wednesday; the region won independence from Spain 200 years ago. But Blinken warned that "anti-democratic developments pose a growing threat to Central America's future," adding "The United States stands with all those

speaking truth to power."

The digital wallet appears to have been overloaded by the sheer number of Salvadorans looking to take advantage of the \$30 bonus that the government put in each account to incentivize adoption.

Bukele, the main promoter of using the cryptocurrency, acknowledged the government's three-month rollout may have been too ambitious. He said technical glitches had prevented the app from working on some kinds of phones.

There has been skepticism about the government's enthusiastic adoption of bitcoin as a legal tender along with the U.S. dollar since Bukele announced it in a video recorded in English and played at a bitcoin conference in Miami in June. Bitcoin is subject to wild swings in value in a matter of minutes.

Any business with the technological capacity to do so is required to accept payment in bitcoin, but no private citizen is required to use it.

Recent public opinion surveys in El Salvador have said a majority of Salvadorans oppose making it an official currency. Still Bukele says there are now a half million users of the digital payment system in the Central American nation. □

Draft of Cuba's new family code opens door for gay marriage

HAVANA, Cuba (AP) — The draft of a new family code for Cuba released Wednesday proposes allowing same-sex couples to marry and adopt as well as giving children greater participation in decisions that affect them.

The preliminary draft, which must be approved by Cuba's parliament then go to a grassroots plebiscite, comes almost three years after the island's communist government backed away from enshrining gay marriage protections in its new constitution in the face of opposition.

Evangelical groups objected to the constitutional proposal to eliminate the

description of marriage as a union of a man and woman, and change it to the union of "two people ... with absolutely equal rights and obligations."

"We consider this version to be consistent with the constitutional text, and develop and update the various legal-family institutions in correspondence with the humanistic nature of our social process," Justice Minister Óscar Silveira Martínez said in announcing the draft.

Evangelical groups, however, are expected to object to the change in the family code draft.

Both Martínez and Yamila González Ferrer, vice presi-

dent of the National Union of Jurists of Cuba, emphasized that the proposed family code is much broader than an authorization of same-sex marriage.

"It protects all expressions of family diversity and the right of each person to establish a family in coherence with the constitutional principles of plurality, inclusion, and human dignity," González said. The draft, which has more than 480 articles, was drawn up by a team of 30 experts and will be posted on the Justice Ministry's website to collect opinions. It will then go to lawmakers — likely in December — then to a popular referendum possibly next year.



In this May 9, 2015 file photo, a couple of Cuba's LGBT community kiss after receiving a blessing from Rev. Roger LaRade, of the Eucharistic Catholic Church in Canada, in Havana, Cuba.

Associated Press

Cuba's current family code dates from 1975 and has been overtaken by new

family structures and social changes, legal experts say. □

LOCAL



Aruba welcomed 80.230 visitors in August 2021 The impact of the Delta Variant is the main cause in decrease

ORANJESTAD – A.T.A. would like to inform our community of the current situation of our tourism industry according to information compiled at this moment from different sectors.

For the month of August we welcomed a total of 80.230 'stay-over' visitors. If we compare August 2021 to August 2019, which was a normal year for tourism, we can see that Aruba recovered an 83% of the total visitors received at that time. Remarkable is also that the amount of visitors from Holland increased with 34% compared to August 2019.

Tourism Recovery

Aruba continues to recover strong since the re-opening of our borders back in July 2020 and the monthly recovery trend is looking positive. However, after

CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) placed Aruba on the fourth category we noticed a decrease in visitors for the month of August.

For the first 8 months of 2021 Aruba received a total of 506,795 visitors.

Projections for the second half of the year shows a positive increase and could mean a 74% tourism recovery compared to 2019. Aruba is being represented in three different continents.

North America is the strongest market. Between January and August 2021 we received a total of 446.499 visitors from this continent. This marks 88.1% of the total di total visitors.

Europe being our second largest market brought

28.566 visitors to Aruba which represented a 5.6% of the total visitors. A total of 18.236 visitors, which represented a 3.6% were from Latin America. A 2.7% which as a total of 13.494 visitors were from other part of the world.

Cruise Tourism

Last June Aruba opened again for the cruise tourism. In August we received a total of 12.342 cruise passengers from 9 different cruise lines. Cruise Tourism will continue its progress gradually. From June to August Aruba welcomed 20.861 passengers from 16 different cruise ships. There are currently cruise ships stationed at our harbor as 'warm lay-up', meaning they are on standby pending instructions upon startup of the operation. This activity produces an

income for our economy. There are no tourist on the ships only crew members (skeleton crew) and they all have to comply to all rules and protocols locally and internationally.

Tourism credits / Central Bank of Aruba

According to the Centrale Bank the so-called 'Tourism Credits' (priority known as 'Tourism Receipts') for the first quarter of 2021 contributed with AWG 554.5 million for our economy which is 46% less compared to the

same period in 2020. Just as any other destination our island is going through some challenges due to the global pandemic. To maintain our established protocols it is extremely important to reduce the amount of active cases in our community. The wellbeing of our residents and visitors are important and adhering to all protocols will contribute to the recovery of our economy. Together we shall overcome this and our tourism will flourish again. □

Guests at Costa Linda honored as Distinguished Visitors



EAGLE BEACH — Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Distinguished Visitors of Aruba. The Distinguished visitor certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba 10 years and more consecutively.

The honorees were Mr. Thomas & Mrs. Deanne Pedersen!

These wonderful people stated that they love the island very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets, delicious variety of foods, its safety and Aruba's warm and friendly people whom have become like family to them.

Richardson together with the representatives of the Costa Linda Beach Resort presented the certificate to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home. □

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Attractions and Sightseeing locations in Aruba

ORANJESTAD — There are enough sightseeing locations on the island to fill up a month-long vacation. Aruba's beaches are a big attraction, and although it's great to spend long days just relaxing on the beach and listening to the ocean, there are also plenty of opportunities to get to know Aruba's most attractive sights, historical and natural attractions, and museums. Check out this attraction you don't want to miss!

Bubali Bird Sanctuary

Watch more than 80 species of migratory birds from the Bubali watch tower, overlooking their resting and breeding area. The observation tower allows birdwatchers to get a true birds' eye view. Migratory birds, looking for lush vegetation in which to nest, find an oasis within the Bubali Bird Sanctuary. The nearby water treatment facility empties into two inter-connected man-made bird ponds. Birds that inhabit the sanctuary include herons, egrets, gulls,

skimmers, coots, ducks and more. Located within walking distance of the Palm Beach resorts, the Bubali Bird Sanctuary offers some unique bird watching opportunities. You can't miss it as it is located just in front of the historical Old Dutch Windmill. Make sure to bring your camera as many of these birds will randomly fly by the observation tower giving a little show. This is a great place to bring kids for a unique and possibly once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be so close to the



untamed. The happiest island in the Caribbean is so much more than just sun, sand and sea. □

COVID -19 statistics July 1 – September 12, 2021

ORANJESTAD - Statistics of the Epidemiology Section of the Department of Public Health show that from July 1, 2021, of every 10,000 non-vaccinated persons, 92 were hospitalized.

Since the start of July 2021, when the Department of Health detected the first cases of the

Total vaccinated persons in Aruba	
Age groups	Percentage vaccinated persons
12 to 17 years	57%
18 – 59 years	74.1%
60 years and older	82.1%

Delta variant in Aruba, it spread quickly and drove a significant outbreak of COVID-19 cases and causing great concern. Delta is more contagious than the other virus strains. We also experience it in Aruba when comparing the current outbreak with the previous ones.

As of September 12, 2021, in Aruba, we have a total of 70,105 (75%) vaccinated persons with AZV insurance, 12 years and older, and 23,668 (25%) non vaccinated persons with AZV insurance. This information is essential to analyze: of the 70,105 (75%) vaccinated persons, 42 were hospitalized with COVID-19, and of the 23,668 (25%) non vaccinated persons 219 persons were hospitalized from July to September 12,

2021. From all the data from July 1 to September 12, 2021, we can conclude that for every 10,000 non vaccinated citizens, 92 were hospitalized and for 10,000 vaccinated persons, 6 were hospitalized. This analysis is based on statistics of persons with AZV General Health Insurance. The reason for using AZV figures is that the achieved results are real and reliable. These figures do not include undocumented persons or students studying abroad.

The Department of Health continues to evaluate and direct its vaccination policy through continued analysis. It proves to be very effective in preventing hospitalizations and also saving the lives of our citizens. □

JetBlue's 15th anniversary operating into Aruba

ORANJESTAD - The Aruba Airport and the JetBlue Airways team celebrated with a cake and snacks, JetBlue's 15th "Blueversary" (anniversary) operating into Aruba.

It all started with the announcement back in 2006 that JetBlue would start its operation into Aruba out of its home base, New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK), with daily flights. Soon

after that, in June 2007, weekly service out of Boston (BOS) was launched, which soon ramped up to daily service. Can you recall that special day back in 2014 when JetBlue brought Aruba's one-millionth passenger for that year to Aruba? In January 2017, JetBlue added service out of Fort Lauderdale (FLL), and in November 2020, the latest destination, Newark (EWR), was added.

Today's JetBlue network out of the northeast and the south of the USA into Aruba is a testament to JetBlue's continued confidence in the destination. JetBlue is AUA Airport's largest carrier now, with a market share of 27% of all departing flights out of Aruba. AUA Airport's partnership with JetBlue is invaluable and has grown strong and resilient, especially during the past trying times. Through the strong partner-



ship built over the past 15 years, AUA Airport is confident that AUA Airport will continue to enjoy a fruitful relationship with JetBlue for many more years to come. Happy 15th Blueversary JetBlue! □



Like nomads travel from place to place to find fresh pasture for their livestock, the Nataf family –father Victor with sons David and Gregory - faithfully followed their nose for good food. As young boys, they indulged in their grandparent's culinary joie-de-vivre in the South of France. Ticked by the palette of excellent dishes prepared in their mid-seventies' restaurant in the Alps of France and filled with exquisite taste of their other restaurants in the beautiful island of Porquerolles near St Tropez that made it to a ranking of 13/20 in the Gault Millau restaurant grading. To the Natafs, food is a bohemian experience_ unconventional, eclectic and off the beaten track. Welcome to Bohemian Aruba!

A Grande entrée through a huge, wooden, Moroccan-style door takes you into a foodies Garden of Eden. Big trees stand tall and proudly, lit with hanging lanterns creating a green and romantic lush paradise. There's a playful setting of different-styled tables, including seating under a Colombian Rattan tipi tent, complete the feel of let go alias laissez-faire. The cool bar blinks to New York loft style, think industrial bold. Waiters with hip suspenders and berets add a hint of French flair while lounge music fills the air. The décor is designed by David himself.

David Nataf - Owner

"Thoughts of finger licking dishes fill my mind thinking of my youth. The smell of fresh-baked croissants and chocolate bread hand made by my uncle's brother in law's father "the baker". The restaurant's kitchen fridge stuffed with the most exquisite dishes that my brother and I consumed secretly after a night out to the frustration of the chef. We were young boys eating away the night with foie gras and loup de mer local branzino."

Tongue melting fondue and raclette, wood oven pizzas with fresh Emmentaler cheese and hand-picked champignons founded his foodie character. Add this

Bohemian Restaurant & Bar, The Story: French Nomads in Culinary Avant-Garde



to the time he spent at the grandparents' house in the vineyards with fruits, veggies, poultry, and game within hand's reach. What was missing was bought at the weekly farmers market. "I grew up with the farm-to-table concept."

Le Magic

The family magic is translated through David into Bohemian. Starters like Vitello Tonnato, le Ceviche, homemade Foie Gras Terrine or Escargots "A la Bourguignonne" tickle your taste buds. For entrees Whole Shrimps Flambe with Cognac, Grilled 10oz Angus Rib Eye Steak "Maître d'Hôtel" or Braised Lamb Shank ignite passion in your soul. Spicy Moroccan Mahi-Mahi Kebab with chickpea hummus and ratatouille crumble, Paella made with their own fish broth filled with chicken seafood and chorizo are other culinary delights

but there is much more. Wines are imported directly from France regions, as is the champagne. Italian, Spanish, American and Australian choices complete the list.

Raving reviews on a continuous basis prove that Bohemian has got it! Every Wednesday there is Live Flamenco with Angela Croes, on Thursdays you will enjoy the beautiful live sounds of Angela's violin and on Friday's and Saturday's go with the beat of electro lounge. Live salsa music can be enjoyed on Sunday's.

"Join our gypsy experience, travel with taste"

For reservations call +297 280 8448 or mail reservations@bohemianaruba.com or book through the website bohemianaruba.com. □



The freelancing boom may change how you buy life insurance

By **GEORGIA ROSE** of **Nerd-Wallet**

Younger generations seem to have a knack for disrupting the status quo, and life insurance may be next on the list. As Generation Z and millennial workers challenge the concept of a traditional career and drive an increase in freelancing, the role of workplace group life insurance in long-term financial plans is likely to change.

Freelancers understand that they need to take 100% responsibility for their finances, says Jessica Lepore, founder of Surevested, a New York-based life insurance agency. "It's not all packaged like if you were to work for a corporation."

LESS RELIANCE ON GROUP LIFE POLICIES

Many people in their 40s and 50s depend on life insurance provided through an employer, says Grant Dunn, vice president of financial services at Lakeman, an insurance brokerage in St. Louis. But younger generations prefer to look for coverage outside the workplace, he says. Last year, life insurance application activity grew more than twice as fast for Americans 44 and younger compared to those 45-59, according to MIB Group, an information-sharing service for insurers.

"They're going more to outside markets rather than just trusting what they have through their employer, because they know that their employer is going to change a lot in the next 30



In this April 5, 2017, file photo, Memorial High School senior Taylor Wicks figures which life insurance plan to purchase during the Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce's Real Life Academy at the Lismore Hotel in Eau Claire, Wis.

Associated Press

years," Dunn says.

Younger workers typically do not stay at jobs as long as older workers, the most recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows. In January 2020, median job tenure was 2.8 years for workers 25 to 34 years old, compared to 9.9 years for workers 55 to 64. Workers can't always convert group life to an individual policy to avoid losing coverage when they leave a job. "What I would suggest to millennials that plan on job-hopping around is just get it outside of your employer so you don't have to worry about it," Dunn says. This is perhaps even more necessary for long-term freelancers, who

do not have an employer to provide coverage.

Plus, basic group life insurance may be free to employees, but it often tops out at one or two times a worker's annual salary. That's typically not enough to provide a financial safety net, Dunn says.

HOW LIFE INSURANCE PLANNING DIFFERS FOR FREELANCERS

A simple way to estimate how much life insurance you need is to multiply your income by the number of years your beneficiaries will need financial support. This calculation can be tricky for freelancers with unpredictable incomes, but they can follow the lead of workers in commission-based

jobs like real estate, where monthly income may not be consistent, Dunn says.

He suggests looking at what you earn on average, as well as what people at your skill level in the industry make over time. Once you estimate your annual salary, you can figure out how much your life insurance policy would need to cover if you die. If you're unsure of your future needs, Lepore recommends getting a policy that allows you to adjust coverage over time, such as a term life policy you can convert to permanent coverage later.

"The best thing to ever do is get at least one policy going," Lepore says, "because that can confirm your eligi-

bility at a later time in your life if you decide you need more coverage."

CHANGES TO HOW AMERICANS SHOP FOR LIFE INSURANCE

Traditionally, getting life insurance can take several weeks and often requires a medical exam. "With all the technology today, the younger generation can't wrap their minds around it taking 45 days to get a policy in force," Dunn says.

Some insurers have already responded to this issue by using big data algorithms to process applications online in minutes. So if you're looking for fast coverage, these products may be your best bet. However, whether you shop online or not, the type of life insurance you buy should align with your overall coverage goals.

Permanent policies, such as whole life, generally stay in force until you die and include an investment account. You can withdraw or borrow against the policy's cash value while you're still alive. The growing popularity of digital investments can make traditional whole life policies less enticing as investment opportunities to the younger generations, Dunn says. If you just want your life insurance to cover your death and not act as an investment vehicle, you may want to consider term life insurance. Term life covers you for a set number of years, does not have an investment component, tends to be less expensive than permanent policies and is typically sufficient for most people. □

Union, Mondelez reach tentative agreement amid strike

HENRICO, Va. (AP) — A tentative contract agreement reached between snack company Mondelez and striking union workers could end a walkout that began last month.

The Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union and Mondelez issued separate statements Wednesday announcing a tentative deal, but neither

would discuss the terms, The Richmond Times-Dispatch reported.

The tentative agreement "has been fully recommended by both parties," Mondelez spokesperson Laurie M. Guzzinati said. Local officers on the committee will present the tentative agreement to workers in coming days and they will then vote on the agreement, Anthony Shelton, the

union's international president, said in a statement. It was uncertain when a vote will take place.

Mondelez, one of the world's largest snack companies, and the union have been negotiating a new four-year contract since the old one expired at the end of May.

The contract covers union employees at six Mondelez sites. □



In this Feb. 9, 2011, file photo, a shopper passes a shelf of Nabisco products, a Mondelez International brand: Premium saltines, Triscuits, Ritz crackers and Wheat Thins, at a Ralphs Fresh Fare supermarket in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

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Yesterday's answer

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9-17

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three I's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

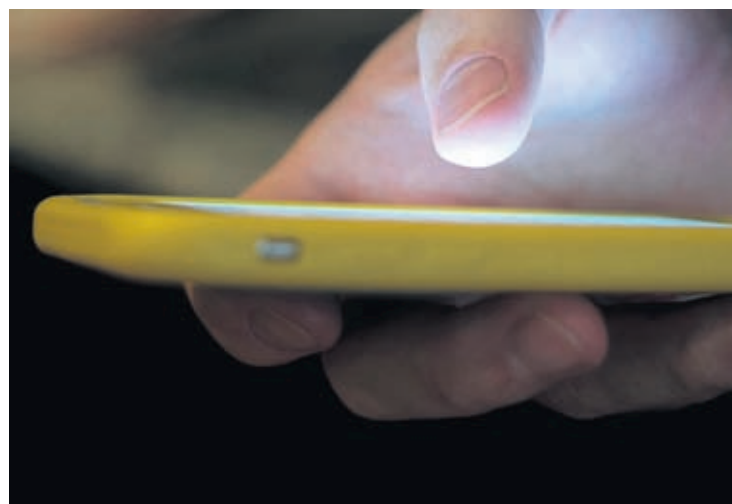
9-17

CRYPTOQUOTE

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KNMH

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: DON'T SPEND TIME BEATING ON A WALL. HOPING TO TRANSFORM IT INTO A DOOR. — COCO CHANEL

Americans have little trust in online security: AP-NORC poll



In this Aug. 11, 2019, file photo, a man uses a cellphone in New Orleans.

Associated Press

By MATT O'BRIEN
AP Technology Writer

Most Americans don't believe their personal information is secure online and aren't satisfied with the federal government's efforts to protect it, according to a poll.

The poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and MeriTalk shows that 64% of Americans say their social media activity is not very or not at all secure. About as many have the same security doubts about online information revealing their physical location. Half of Americans believe their private text conversations lack security.

And they're not just concerned. They want something done about it. Nearly three-quarters of Americans say they support establishing national standards for how companies can collect, process and share personal data.

"What is surprising to me is that there is a great deal of support for more government action to protect data privacy," said Jennifer Benz, deputy director of the AP-NORC Center. "And it's bipartisan support."

But after years of stalled efforts toward stricter data privacy laws that could hold big companies accountable for all the personal data they collect and share, the poll also indicates that Americans don't have much trust in the government to fix it.

A majority, 56%, puts more

faith in the private sector than the federal government to handle security and privacy improvements, despite years of highly publicized privacy scandals and hacks of U.S. corporations from Target to Equifax that exposed the personal information of millions of people around the world. Indeed, companies such as Apple have made a big push to pitch themselves as attuned to consumer privacy preferences and committed to protect them.

"I feel there is little to no security whatsoever," said Sarah Blick, a professor of medieval art history at Kenyon College in Ohio. The college's human resources department told Blick earlier this year that someone fraudulently applied for unemployment insurance benefits in her name.

Such fraud has spiked since the pandemic as perpetrators buy stolen personal identifying information on the dark web and use it to flood state unemployment systems with bogus claims. "I believe my information was stolen when one of the credit bureaus was hacked, but it also could

have been when Target was hacked or any other of the several successful hacks into major corporations," Blick said.

About 71% of Americans believe that individuals' data privacy should be treated as a national security issue, with a similar level of support among Democrats and Republicans. But only 23% are very or somewhat satisfied in the federal government's current efforts to protect Americans' privacy and secure their personal data online.

"This is not a partisan issue," said Colorado state Rep. Terri Carver, a Republican who co-sponsored a consumer data privacy bill signed into law by Democratic Gov. Jared Polis in July. It takes effect in 2023. The legislation, which met opposition from Facebook and other companies, follows similar measures enacted in California and Virginia that give people the right to access and delete personal information. Colorado's also enables people to opt out of having their data tracked, profiled and sold. "That was certainly one of the pieces where we got the strongest pushback but we felt it was so important," Carver said. "There's great frustration that individuals have that they don't have the tools and the legal support to establish any kind of effective control over their personal data."

Carver said it took several years to get the law passed, and advocates had to abandon some priorities, such as the idea of enabling people to opt in if they want to allow processing of their personal data — instead of making them opt out. □

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Can kids be harmed wearing masks to protect against COVID?



Can kids be harmed wearing masks to protect against COVID?

Associated Press

By **LINDSEY TANNER**
AP Medical Writer

Can kids be harmed wearing masks to protect against COVID?

No, there is no scientific evidence showing masks cause harm to kids' health despite baseless claims suggesting otherwise.

The claims are circulating on social media and elsewhere just as virus outbreaks are hitting many reopened U.S. schools particularly those without mask mandates.

Among the unfounded arguments: Masks can foster germs if they become moist or cause unhealthy levels of carbon dioxide. But experts say washing masks routinely keeps them safe and clean.

Some argue that young children miss important visual and social cues that enhance learning and development when their classmates and teachers are wearing masks. But others note that children with vision or hearing impairment learn to adapt and that other kids can, too.

"We don't know for sure that masks have no developmental effects but we do know that there are adverse effects from not trying to stop transmission," said Dr. Emily Levy, a critical care and infection control expert at Mayo Clinic Children's Center.

There's strong evidence masking children in schools can reduce COVID-19

transmission to other children and adults.

Across 166 schools in Maricopa County, Arizona, COVID-19 outbreaks are two times more common at those without mask mandates, said Dr. Rebecca

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Sunenshine, medical director of the county's public health department.

Studies from school districts in other states including North Carolina have also found that masking can greatly reduce COVID-19 transmission rates, especially when it's combined with physical distancing and other prevention measures.

"One thing that we know about prevention, about infection control is that there isn't a single intervention that will win the day," said Dr. Joshua Schaffzin, director of infection prevention and control at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. But he noted there's plenty of evidence that masking is a key component in making schools safer.

To avoid skin irritation, doctors suggest washing masks regularly, making sure they fit properly and picking masks made with soft, breathable fabric. □



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Red Cross	582 2219

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

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Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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Narcotics Anonymous
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Fundacion Contra Violencia Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
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Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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Jessica Chastain redeems a televangelist in 'Tammy Faye'

By JAKE COYLE

NEW YORK (AP) — In the nearly 10 years it took for Jessica Chastain to get made a film about the Christian televangelist Tammy Faye Messner, she studied many of the kinds of things you'd expect — the hours of television footage, Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato's 2000 documentary. But one of the most revelatory sources was a largely forgotten WB reality show from 2002.

By then, Messner had fallen from the heights of her televangelist fame after scandals brought down the multimillion-dollar ministry she and her longtime husband, Jim Bakker, built with the PTL ("Praise the Lord") Network. So there she was on "The Surreal Life" alongside D-list celebrities like Vanilla Ice and adult film star Ron Jeremy, living in a Hollywood Hills mansion for two weeks.

"You're thinking: What is this? I know they put her in there because they thought it would create a lot of drama. But it was a beautiful thing to watch," says Chastain. "You saw her consistently being who she was, not judging anyone, but ministering to them."

To Chastain, what stood out was Messner's steadiness of faith. As much as the highly coiffed, heavily made-up televangelist's appearance fluctuated over the years, Messner — whose finest moment may have been a 1985 show talking to gay minister and AIDS activist Steve Pieters about HIV — preached God's love to everyone. Even Vanilla Ice. He later wrote a song about her.

"She just loved everyone, and she loved without judgment and she believed everyone was deserving of God's grace," Chastain said in a recent interview. "Now I wasn't baptized. But I think that's supposed to be what Christianity is about."

In "The Eyes of Tammy Faye," directed by Michael Showalter, which Searchlight Pictures releases in theaters Friday, Chastain gives perhaps the most ambitious performance of her career



Jessica Chastain, left, the star of "The Eyes of Tammy Faye," poses for a portrait with director Michael Showalter during the 2021 Toronto International Film Festival, Sunday, Sept. 12, 2021, at the Royal Fairmont York in Toronto.

Associated Press

so far. For the widely admired actor of "The Tree of Life," "Zero Dark Thirty" and "The Help," it's the first time she's tackled a decades-spanning biopic with all the transformational trappings — the make-up, the prosthetics, the accent. It's a big swing, one Chastain was hungry for.

"There were a number of reasons I wanted to do it," says Chastain, who acquired the rights to adapt the documentary in 2012. "But number one was it was the scariest because it's the most far-reaching."

It was during the press tour for 2012's "Zero Dark Thirty" that Chastain first caught the RuPaul-narrated doc on TV. At the time, it seemed like the furthest thing from her CIA operative in Kathryn Bigelow's film. The documentary, while reveling in the kitsch of the Bakkers, sought to celebrate the much-parodied Messner, who died in 2007 at the age of 65.

At its most popular, "The PTL Club," their flagship program, reached as many as 13 million households. Constant appeals for donations from viewers helped swell their ministry, including Heri-

tage USA, a Disney-style theme park and resort in South Carolina.

But sex and financial scandal toppled their empire. Bakker (played by Andrew Garfield in the film) used ministry funds to pay a woman who said Bakker sexually assaulted her. (Bakker denied it.) He was convicted in 1989 of raising pledges with false promises while also steering millions to pay for the couple's lavish lifestyle.

Messner, who filed for divorce while Bakker was imprisoned, was never indicted. But she took more lumps in public opinion. She was mocked on "Saturday Night Live." Chastain recognized a complicated woman who was treated unfairly.

"I knew it was important for me in terms of gender, in terms of righting a wrong that I felt the media had done to her," Chastain says. "We all had a collective memory that wasn't accurate, including myself."

"The Eyes of Tammy Faye" is the most dramatic film yet for Showalter, the comedian of "The State" who has developed a second career as a filmmaker. But his

movies — "Wet Hot American Summer," "My Name Is Doris," "The Big Sick" — have also often blended surreal with painfully real.

"I really like characters that are out of step with the world," says Showalter. "I think Tammy Faye is really compelling in that way. She was this sort of laughing stock but time has been really generous toward her. We've been able to look back and realize there was a much more authentic person there than we gave her credit for."

The film spans three decades and some very drastic fluctuations in period style. That made it a particular challenge to make-up department head Linda Dowds, not just in charting Messner's physical evolution, but keeping the extravagant looks from being too over-the-top.

"We were looking for the subtleties and looking for the less-is-more — even though there's a lot of more," says Dowds.

"There are some characters that use make-up as a mask," Dowds adds. "For Tammy, she said you don't have to be dowdy to be a Christian. She never quite

understood why people made fun of her look. She said: 'This is me. This is what makes me happy. Whenever I feel a bit down, I just put more on.'"

The performance, flamboyant and empathetic, has immediately put Chastain into the Academy Awards conversation. She has twice before been nominated but never won. But it's also extended a spiritual journey for Chastain, one that included Terence Malick's cosmic existential wonder "The Tree of Life." The religious passages, Madonna paintings and Bach that Malick fed her, she considers "a spiritual and faith-based course on love that I really had never had in my life."

And it's clear that Chastain feels a particular protective bond with Messner, a relentlessly upbeat, ultimately good-hearted woman who made her way in an overwhelmingly male-controlled, crassly commercial media world. Part naive dupe, part undeserving victim, part guilty collaborator in her downfall.

What Chastain perhaps most admires and connects with in Messner is her earnestness — she is who she is. That attitude is similar to how Chastain, who grew up humbly in Sacramento, California, has tried to navigate the movie industry. She's been a vocal advocate for women, including in making the upcoming "The 355," a female-led ensemble spy thriller. Chastain helped get it made when she noticed the lack of any action film like it. As with "Tammy Faye," she's a producer on it.

"Tammy Faye kind of approached everything with: Let's have a good time. I think perhaps that's how I try to approach things, too. I mean, listen, I'm always up for a fight," Chastain says, laughing. "I just know everything is possible. Maybe we're looking at it from a wrong angle. It may not be possible with an old formula or an old set of rules. So let's do something else and make it possible. I never see a wall or a door." □

Young, stacked U.S. team faces familiar battle in Ryder Cup

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

The Americans would seem to have a lot in their favor at the Ryder Cup.

They are on home soil at Whistling Straits along the Wisconsin shores of Lake Michigan. A full house is expected, along with louder than usual cheering for the Stars & Stripes because of COVID-19 travel restrictions for European-based fans.

As for the players? Younger than ever, to be sure, but no less stacked. The Americans have eight of the top 10 in the world ranking — Europe only has Jon Rahm at No. 1 — on a team that has won twice as many majors.

This is nothing new, of course. With one exception, the Americans always bring a better collection of players to the Ryder Cup. They just rarely leave with the precious gold trophy.

"We have the best players this year," said Paul Azinger, the lead analyst for NBC Sports who still uses pronouns as if it were 2008 when he was the U.S. captain. "And obviously, they (Europe) roll in with the most confidence and maybe the best team."

The trick is getting the American players to realize that. At the last Ryder Cup in France three years ago, the U.S. was just as loaded with nine major champions on the 12-man squad who had combined to win 10 of the last 16 majors.

They got smoked again.

"I feel like on paper, from head to toe, the world ranking, I would say we're a stronger team," U.S. captain Steve Stricker said. "But I don't think our guys feel we're better. They know deep down how hard it is to beat them."

All that matters on paper are the results. Europe has won nine of the last 12 times in the Ryder Cup. And while the U.S. still holds a 26-14-2 advantage dating to the start in 1927, that's not the real measure. Continental Europeans did not join the fray until 1979, and since then they are 11-8-1.

Europe, with Padraig Harrington now at the helm of



This combo of 2021 file photos show golfers Bryson DeChambeau, left, and Brooks Koepka. Associated Press

the juggernaut, tries to extend its dominance at the 43rd Ryder Cup, which was postponed one year because of the pandemic.

Three relentless days of matches Sept. 24-26 will be held at Whistling Straits, the cliffside course with 1,000 or so bunkers that has hosted the PGA Championship three times in the last 17 years. American players, it should be noted, have been runner-up in all three. Why do the Europeans keep winning the Ryder Cup?

They relish the role as underdogs. They seem to play with a chip on their shoulders, perhaps because the Americans don't — and probably should — have one on theirs.

"That's our advantage, I guess, in a way, right?" Ian Poulter said in a SiriusXM PGA Tour Radio interview. "That we have delivered when perhaps we shouldn't have delivered. And this is the magical question that gets asked all the time. That's what has the American press scratching their head. That's what has the American team scratching their heads at times. On paper — on paper — the U.S. team should have delivered."

"It's for us to enjoy and for the American team to figure out," he said. "There is a level of magic sauce which

we've been able to create over the years."

Europe is bringing winning experience to Wisconsin.

Lee Westwood ties a European record by playing in his 11th Ryder Cup at age 48.

He joins Sergio Garcia, already with the highest points total in history, on a short list of those who have played in Ryder Cups over parts of four decades. Garcia has contributed 25 1/2 points, the same amount as this entire U.S. team combined.

Whatever experience the Americans bring are mostly bad memories. Their lone victory in the last decade was at Hazeltine in 2016 against a European team that had six rookies. Only one of them, Matt Fitzpatrick, made it back on another team.

The six rookies are the most for the Americans since 2008 when they won at Valhalla.

Those include Collin Morikawa, who was an amateur when the last Ryder Cup was played and since

then has won two majors, a World Golf Championship and led the U.S. standings in his first year of eligibility. It includes FedEx Cup champion Patrick Cantlay and Olympic gold medalist Xander Schauffele, who were a formidable team at the Presidents Cup in Australia two years ago.

"I think it's a good time for a younger influx of players," Schauffele said, "and really excited to run with these guys."

And while the veterans include Dustin Johnson and Jordan Spieth — the only Americans to have played at least three Ryder Cups — they also include Brooks Koepka and Bryson DeChambeau, who have made their dislike for each other abundantly clear over the last few months.

DeChambeau has stopped talking to the press after he was criticized for saying he wasn't vaccinated because he's young and healthy and would rather give it to people who need it (even though the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention has said there is no shortage).

He also has endured heckling, with fans calling him "Brooksy" to get under his skin.

Koepka, meanwhile, injured his wrist hitting a tree root beneath the turf at East Lake. He plans to be at Whistling Straits and said he would be ready to go, though at what strength won't be known until he gets there.

A week before the matches, Koepka was quoted in a Golf Digest interview as saying the Ryder Cup week is hectic, odd and takes him out of his routine because of the team element. Azinger read the interview and suggested if Koepka doesn't love the Ryder Cup, he should give his spot to someone who does.

This is the drama Stricker can do without as he leads a team desperate for a win. He said he spoke to Koepka and DeChambeau in the last month and they assured him they would put their differences aside.

That's never been a problem for Europe, which has not been immune to personality conflicts over the years. It just never shows inside the ropes, in uniform, with a 17-inch trophy at stake.

"You have your favorites, guys who get along with, some you get along with a little worse," Garcia said. "I can't speak for the Americans — I don't know what happens there — but it feels like when we get in the team room, everyone takes their armor off and puts it aside. You can feel that. Everyone is happy to put their arm around everyone else and try to help. It's just the way it is."

Maybe it's that European magic sauce. Whatever it is, it's been working. □



Mahle, Reds avoid sweep, edge Pirates 1-0

By **WILL GRAVES**

AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Cincinnati Reds reliever Mychal Givens has been around long enough to understand the rhythms of a season. Funks happen. What defines a team is how it responds to them. With the Reds staggering at the end of a frustrating nine-game road trip, Givens delivered a fastball that gave Cincinnati a much-needed jolt, exorcising some bad vibes in the process.

Givens struck out Pittsburgh's Hoy Park with a 98 mph heater to seal a 1-0 win over the Pirates on Thursday to send the Reds home for a pivotal series against the Los Angeles Dodgers with something akin to momentum.

Less than 24 hours after a stunning ninth-inning loss in which Givens surrendered the winning run when Wilmer Difo scored from second on a fielder's choice, he bounced back by picking up his eighth save.

It wasn't easy. The Pirates had the tying run on third and the winning run on second with two outs. Givens fell behind Park 3-0 before four straight fastballs — all 95 mph or better — ended the threat.

"Compete," Givens said. "That's all that matters."

Something the Reds are trying to do in an effort to stay in the mix for the second



Cincinnati Reds starting pitcher Tyler Mahle delivers during the first inning of a baseball game against the Pittsburgh Pirates in Pittsburgh, Sept. 16, 2021.

Associated Press

NL wild-card spot. They entered the day 1 1/2 games behind St. Louis and were in danger of getting swept by the last-place Pirates.

Instead, Tyler Mahle battled through six innings, Asdrúbal Cabrera hit a go-ahead, pinch-hit sacrifice fly in the seventh and the bullpen did the rest.

"It's really important," Givens said. "We needed this win today especially to continue to contend for a playoff spot."

Mahle (12-5) allowed five hits — all singles — and struck out four with a walk as the Reds finished 3-6 during a nine-game swing through Chicago, St. Louis

and Pittsburgh.

Cabrera, 0 for 18 since Cincinnati claimed him off waivers last month, provided the game's only run while pinch-hitting for Mahle in the top of the seventh. Tyler Stephenson led off with a double against Cody Ponce (0-4) and pinch-runner Delino DeShields moved to third on Shogo Akiyama's sacrifice bunt two batters later. Cabrera followed with a long drive toward the gap in left-center that let DeShields trot home.

"That's why I'm here," the 35-year-old Cabrera said. "I'm here to help the team to win."

Either Los Angeles or San Francisco — whoever doesn't win the NL West — will claim the first wild-card berth. Cincinnati is hoping to emerge from a four-team scramble with St. Louis, San Diego and Philadelphia for the other.

A pair of tight losses — including the stunning walk-off on Difo's mad dash from second — had the Reds teetering. Givens, acquired in a July trade in an effort to stabilize the bullpen, was eager for another crack at the Pirates.

"That kind of stuff happens," Givens said. "For me (the loss) was a fluke for me. At the same time, you just

wake up the next day and compete."

Ben Gamel had two of Pittsburgh's six hits, but he was also thrown out at the plate in the second inning while trying to score from third on a fielder's choice by Michael Perez. Cincinnati second baseman Jonathan India's throw home was perfect and Stephenson had the ball by the time Gamel attempted to unsuccessfully slide under the tag.

Pittsburgh fell to 0-14 this season when trying to sweep an opponent. There were bright spots, however, for a club that went 6-3 during a nine-game homestand against Detroit, Washington and Cincinnati.

"We haven't had a sweep all season but, as of late, we're playing really good baseball," Pirates third baseman Ke'Bryan Hayes said. "Pitching's there. Hitting's there. So, that's all we can ask for."

OVERTON PERSEVERES

Rookie right-hander Connor Overton, claimed off waivers from Toronto earlier this month, worked three scoreless innings in his first career start.

"I had that quick moment of being overwhelmed, and then I kind of came to and just wanted to do the same thing I've been doing all year, just making pitches and getting people out," Overton said. □

Angels' Ohtani has sore arm, may not pitch again this season



Los Angeles Angels designated hitter Shohei Ohtani, of Japan, plays with a ball in the dugout during the second inning of a baseball game against the Chicago White Sox in Chicago, Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021.

Associated Press

By **MARK GONZALES**

Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Two-way star Shohei Ohtani won't pitch Friday for the Los Angeles Angels because of a sore right arm that could sideline him as a pitcher for the rest of the season.

"If there's any kind of lingering soreness, you may not see him pitch," Angels manager Joe Maddon said prior to Thursday's game against the Chicago White Sox.

Ohtani (9-2, 3.36 ERA) felt soreness while playing

catch Wednesday. Maddon said he raised the possibility of the likely AL MVP being shut down on the mound for the rest of the season during a meeting. Maddon said there are currently no plans for Ohtani to be examined by a doctor, nor has it been determined when he would try to resume playing catch.

Ohtani, 27, hasn't pitched since Sept. 10, when he was tagged for six runs on nine hits in 3 1/3 innings in a loss at Houston.

Maddon said Ohtani

would like to continue pitching in an attempt to get his 10th victory.

"(Ten wins) always looks better than nine," Maddon said. "But you can't let that be the driving factor."

The arm discomfort won't prevent Ohtani from continuing to serve as a designated hitter.

Ohtani entered Thursday's game against the White Sox ranked second in the major leagues with 44 home runs and 74 extra-base hits and fourth with a .599 slugging percentage. □